network by laying optical fibre cable along the Railway track by utilising Railways' right of way. Railways have taken steps for developing a business plan which will be implemented through the medium of a professionally managed corporation.

(c) and (d) The objectives of the proposed venture are:

(i) Speedily modernising Railway's telecommunication system to facilitate safety, operations and efficiency;

(ii) Supplementing national telecom infrastructure thereby spurring growth of telecom, internet and IT- enabled services in all parts of country, especially rural and backward areas located in vicinity of Railway track; and

(iii) Generating much needed revenue for implementation of Railways development and safety enhancement schemes.

(e) and (f) The venture will speedily modernise Railway's telecommunication system thereby improving not only Railway's operational efficiency but safety of Railway passengers and trains.

Construction of over Bridges in Punjab

3775. SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH LIBRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under consideration of Government to construct over bridges at Sirhind, Khanna, Morinda, Kurali and Mandi Gobindgarh in Punjab;

(b) if so, what is the status of the proposal as on date; and

(c) if not, whether Government propose to undertake a survey of its own, in view of safety of the public in these areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b)

(i) *Road Over Bridge at Sirhind:* This is a sanctioned work and will be taken up as soon as State Govt. starts work on approaches.

(ii) *Road Over Bridge at Khanna:* The proposal for replacement of an existing Level crossing near Khanna Railway Station with Road Over Bridge was sponsored by Punjab Govt. in 1986-87. Before it could be

included in Railway Budget, the State Govt. showed their inability to provide funds for this work. As such the proposal had to be dropped. Thereafter, no fresh proposal has been sponsored till date by the State Govt.

(iii) *Road Over Bridge at Morinda & Kurali:* These works are being planned by the State Govt. on BOT (Build, Operate & Transfer) basis. Railway has already made available all requisite clearances to them in this regard. Further action is to be taken by State Govt.

(iv) *Road Over Bridge at Mandi Gobindgarh:* Initially there was a proposal for construction of Road Under Bridge from Municipal Committee, Mandi Gobindgarh. But it was not found feasible due to low height of banks & possibility of water logging. Municipal Committee has been requested to propose for a Road Over Bridge on deposit terms as traffic level at the Level crossing is quite low and it does not qualify for provision of Road Over Bridge on cost sharing basis. Municipal Committee or State Govt. has not yet sponsored any proposal for taking up this work on deposit terms till date.

(c) Railways undertake traffic census at Level Crossings at a regular interval to update traffic density. Proposal for Road Over Bridges in lieu of Level crossings qualifying (Train Vehicle Units being 1 lakh or more) on 'Cost Sharing' basis are required to be sponsored by the State Government(s) fulfilling certain preliminary pre-requisites like advance action for acquisition of land, provision in State's Budget, undertaking for closing of the Level Crossing. The proposals are included in the Railway Budget depending upon the availability of funds and the priority assigned by the State Government. Works are also taken up on Deposit terms at the cost of State Government and on BOT (Build, Operate & Transfer) basis, where the cost is met by the Private entrepreneur and he is compensated through collection of Toll tax or commercial exploitation of the land. In both these cases also, proposals are mooted by the State Government.